



Comments to House Select Committee on School Safety

October 12, 2018

What is Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorder and Developmental Disabilities

- ▶ **Mental Illness** refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders — health conditions involving significant changes in thinking, emotion and/or behavior and distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.
- ▶ **Substance Use Disorder** is the recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs causing clinically and functionally significant impairment; such as health problems, disability and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school or home.



What is Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorder and Developmental Disabilities

- ▶ **Developmental Disability** is a severe, long-term disability that can affect cognitive ability, physical functioning or both. These disabilities appear before age 22 and are likely to be life-long. The term “developmental disability” encompasses intellectual disabilities, but also includes physical disabilities. Some developmental disabilities may be solely physical, such as blindness from birth. Others involve both physical and intellectual disabilities stemming from genetic or other causes, such as Down Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.



National Prevalence

- ▶ 43.8 million Americans experience a mental illness in a given year. Nearly 1 in 25 live with a serious mental illness.
- ▶ Over 20 million adults have a substance use disorder.
- ▶ It is estimated that over 5 million individuals in the United States have a developmental disability. The increase in identification of those with a diagnosis along the autism spectrum disorder is contributing to a growing number.



Stigma

- ▶ Stigma and bias greatly impact treatment for Mental Health Disorders and Substance Use Disorders. Society generally accepts the need for treatment of those with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- ▶ The stigma and bias impact access to care and successful intervention on two levels:
 - Willingness of individuals to seek help.
 - Willingness of family, friends, co-workers etc. to help those in need.



Who is Partners?

- ▶ Contract with NC DHHS to manage public sector population.
- ▶ Current catchment area includes the counties of Burke, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Surry and Yadkin.
- ▶ Partners responsibility is the management and oversight for services to two main population groups:
 - Medicaid enrollees
 - The uninsured
- ▶ Significant difference in those two groups in terms of service funding. (entitlement vs “rationing”).



Scope of Partners' Service

- ▶ Last year served 40,048 individuals (30,531 Medicaid recipients).
- ▶ 37,205 calls received by Access to Care line staff.
 - Wait time on calls
 - Wait time on appointments
- ▶ Overall Medicaid penetration rate of 16.4%. (18.5% in Gaston County).
- ▶ 296 agency providers; 2,953 associated clinicians.
- ▶ 96 Licensed Independent Practitioners.
- ▶ 24 non-state institution hospital contracts (more true facilities due to Atrium and Mission corporate contracts).



Partners Outreach to Members

- ▶ 40,000 mailers to individuals who had used services in the past 12 months.
- ▶ 11,000 packets mailed to consumers seeking services for the first time.
- ▶ 117,500 items distributed with Partners 24/7 crises line number.
- ▶ 26 billboards in Partners catchment area (4 in Gaston County).
- ▶ 4 buses in the Gaston Transit fleet with Access to Care number.
- ▶ 1,753 radio spots on 4 different stations reaching Gaston County.
- ▶ 22 issues of Partners newsletter distributed to over 3,000 individuals.



Partners Outreach (continued)

- ▶ 9 articles regarding Partners work in Gaston Gazette.
- ▶ 463 attendees at Partners Training Academy events.
- ▶ 407 individuals trained in Mental Health First Aid.
- ▶ 827 trained in Question/Persuade/Refer.
- ▶ 440 trained on Community Resiliency Model.
- ▶ 39 additional officers trained in Crisis Intervention Training.
- ▶ 887 attendees at Partners Health Summits.
- ▶ 89,100 visits to Partners website.
- ▶ Routine presentations to County Commissioners televised on local cable channel.
- ▶ 2,200 social media followers.



Collaboration Between Partners and Local School Systems

- ▶ Partners has had a longstanding commitment and engagement with our local school systems. It's in our name!
- ▶ While Partners is responsible for managing the Medicaid and uninsured, our work expands to all students at various levels.
- ▶ Partners has hosted several strategy sessions with local superintendents or their designees over the last year to partner together on MH needs and awareness of school students.



Key Collaborative Efforts Between Partners and Local School Systems

- ▶ Local community collaborative each month.
- ▶ Quarterly roundtable discussions with superintendents.
- ▶ Assist with selecting mental health clinicians for the schools.
- ▶ Fund substance use prevention programs within schools.
- ▶ Funded “Rachel’s Challenge” to eliminate bullying.
- ▶ Provided training materials for recognizing human trafficking.



Key Collaborative Efforts Between Partners and Local School Systems

- ▶ Provide ongoing mental health educational opportunities:
 - ✓ Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - ✓ QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)
 - ✓ Darkness to Light (training to prevent high risk sexual abuse situations)
 - ✓ Youth crisis intervention training for resource officers
 - ✓ IC Hope Training (training to reduce stigma)
- ▶ Recently hosted forum on Virginia Student Threat Assessment.
- ▶ School safety training with Chris Dorn.



Future Efforts Planned

- ▶ Continue to promote Partners access to care line.
- ▶ Continue to provide ongoing and innovative training to school staff at various levels.
- ▶ Continue to educate the public about mental illness and to work to eliminate the stigma.
- ▶ Continue to “PARTNER” with school systems at all levels.

